



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# FOCUSFAA

## It's All About You

Issue 8 » July 19, 2005



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# Swimming With The Sharks

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**G**regg Winters might be the only employee in FAA history to have swum with sharks to enhance aviation safety.

Winters, a scientific and technical photographer at the Civil Aeromedical Institute, retired last month after 45 years with the agency and 57 years in the military and federal government. Along the way he has learned how to shoot down aircraft, mingled with movie stars, and parlayed a talent for broadcasting and filming into a career spanning decades.

For somebody involved in aviation safety projects for so long, Winters' "aviation" career began oddly enough with an anti-aircraft unit during WWII, although he was never deployed. After being called up for the Korean War, Winters began making documentary films for medical research purposes in hospitals serving wounded troops. That led to his current position with FAA.



**Winters interviews actor Fred MacMurray and his wife in 1955 about his experiences filming "My Three Sons" television show.**

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Using video and still photography, Winters has filmed research projects since 1960.

A couple of projects stand out in Winters' mind. One assignment, entitled "Human Factors of Impact Survival," involved crashing a DC-7 in the Arizona desert in the early 1960's to test the dispersion characteristics of various types of fuel and to better understand the effects of a crash on passengers. He mounted special G-force cameras in the cabin to record the effects of the crash on test dummies.

Then there was the time Winters went underwater to film the reaction of sharks to a floatation device under development. "Sharks are inquisitive and they'll tackle anything. We wanted to see if they would attack this device."



**Winters is seen on a break in filming an FAA video on aeromedical research and controller's health in the early 1960s at the Forth Worth TRACON.**

Although a gate protected him from the sharks, he did get the occasional nudge from a shark's snout as it poked through the gate. "They would come up to the gate to see if they could get through. After a while, you find out they respected you and left you alone."

Winters' career in broadcasting also began after WWII and continued

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**Gregg Winters in the famous “heavy paperwork” desk shot.**

through his hospital stints during the Korean War, where he helped lift the spirits of wounded troops with daily news broadcasts and entertainment. He occasionally interviewed Hollywood stars like John Wayne, Fred MacMurray and Jane Russell when they visited the wounded.

They were uniformly pleasant, he said. Wayne was an imposing figure, but didn’t come across like his screen presence. “You might get that impression because he is so big,” said Winters. But in person, “he’s got that easy smile and pleasant way.”

Looking back on his career, Winters said “the thing that kept me going was the fact that most everything we did helped somebody. It was an aid to the scientists because it recorded the results of their work. It was nice to make people look good.” ✈



*“It was nice to make people look good.”*

# One Sweet Lady

## PART OF AN OLD SAYING GOES, “YOU CAN CATCH MORE FLIES WITH HONEY.”

Well, Mariann Crane found out recently that her honey-laden baklava can catch more than flies; she made \$170 selling two batches of the dessert, a well-known treat among her coworkers in Renton, Wash., and at Washington Headquarters.

Crane, manager of human resources for the Northwest Mountain Region, has helped raise more than \$6,000



**One of the more elaborate desserts baked for the fundraising drive.**

in the last three years by organizing a Great American Bake Sale, a fundraising effort sponsored by PARADE

magazine and Share Our Strength, a CFC organization that combats childhood hunger.



# One Sweet Lady

Receipts have grown exponentially since 2003, when the bake sale raised \$900. Last year, it garnered \$2,000, enough to merit a phone call from a Share Our Strength contact. “They were really shocked,” said Crane. “The spokesperson thought it was the highest or the second highest [amount raised] for a bake sale. I think that this year we will probably be the highest.”

It’s hard to imagine anyone raising more than the \$3,415 that Crane and her coworkers



**An array of sweet treats awaits employees at Northwest Mountain Region headquarters.**

cleared this year. But this annual event doesn’t come off half-baked. Crane estimates she has at least 50 coworkers who contribute goodies to the sale. “Most people, when they hear about the cause, are glad to do it,” she said. “FAA, as you know, is extremely generous. It’s quite

overwhelming to see how many people come out for these things.”

When you have such sinful lures as strawberry margarita cheesecake, coconut pecan layer cake and chocolate mint torte — not to mention Crane’s baklava — it’s a little easier to understand the bake sale’s attraction.

# One Sweet Lady

Every year, Crane's group tries to spin new ways to raise more dough. Last year, it held an auction for specialty desserts in addition to the regular bake sale. This year, Crane's coworker, Therese Baty, baked up the idea of pre-ordering: People could bid on desserts and have them delivered any day between the bake sale and Nov. 1. "If I know my husband loves German chocolate cake, and his birthday is Sept. 15, I could order the cake in time for delivery

on his birthday," Crane explained.

Pre-ordering sweetened the pot by raising more than \$1,000. Eight items sold for at least \$100.

Crane is thinking about trying to get each region to join in and compete against each other in friendly bakeoffs. Now that we've upped the ante with the different components, it gets easier every time.

"This is a really great way to give back to the community and provide teambuilding for our

folks in a way that isn't work related. That's what's so awesome about it," Crane said.



*"This is a really great way to give back to the community and provide teambuilding for our folks in a way that isn't work related."*



# One Sweet Lady

## Mariann Crane's Baklava Recipe

### Ingredients

1 lb. of phyllo dough. Defrost in refrigerator day before use. Remove from refrigerator at least an hour before use. Remove what you need from box and leave remainder covered with towel or keep in plastic bag. It dries out very quickly!

1 lb. unsalted butter – melted

8 oz. honey (I use Sue Bee)

1 lb. Walnuts chopped very fine

2 oz. cinnamon

5 tablespoons of sugar

Dash of cloves

2 cups of sugar

1 cup of water

3 lemon peels

1-2 cinnamon sticks

Bring to boil in saucepan; lower to simmer for 15 minutes.

Remove from stovetop and add honey – stir and allow to cool.

### >> Directions

Mix together the walnuts, sugar, cinnamon and cloves and set aside.

Mix the sugar, water, lemon peels and cinnamon sticks. Bring to boil in saucepan; lower to simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from stovetop and add honey. Stir and allow to cool.

Using a 13x9x2 pan, place about 9-10 phyllo sheets in bottom of pan, buttering each with pastry brush.

Sprinkle nut mixture on each buttered sheet until nut mixture is gone. Butter a sheet, sprinkle nuts, butter a sheet, sprinkle nuts.

You should have 7-10 remaining phyllo sheets. Butter each well.

With a sharp knife, score the baklava into diamond shaped pieces. You don't have to cut through nut mixture, just top phyllo layers.

Sprinkle top with a few drops of cold water.

Bake 350 for 1/2 hour and lower to 300 for an additional hour.

Should be golden brown when you remove from oven.

Cut pieces all the way through.

Pour cool syrup to cover entire pan.

Allow to stand for at least a couple of hours.

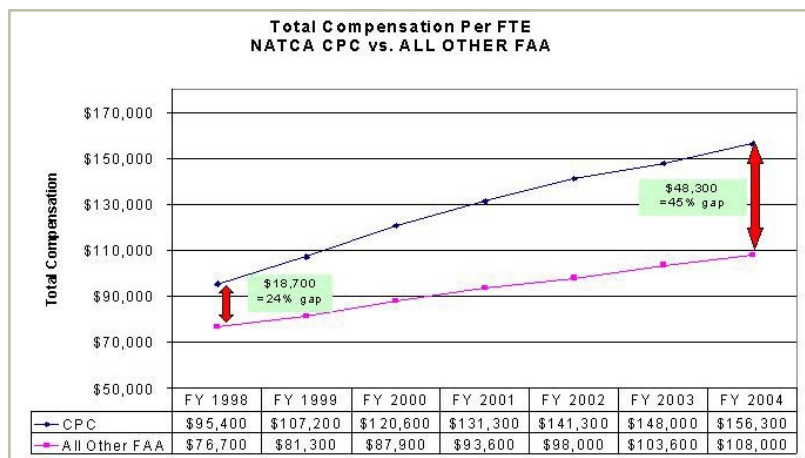


# NATCA Talks Begin

**N**egotiations between FAA and the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) kicked off this week, bringing to an end months of preliminary maneuvering from both sides.

FAA Administrator Marion Blakey has called for an agreement that is fair to the agency, controllers, passengers and taxpayers. She expressed hopes that both sides would work together to reach a voluntary agreement.

The FAA is looking for broad areas of reform in the new contract. Blakey has noted repeatedly in the past that she agrees with managers



**FAA is using this graphic to show what it considers is a huge pay disparity between controllers and other agency employees.**

and supervisors who feel that the old contract has tied their hands in scheduling and staffing at air traffic control facilities.

"A new contract should restore basic management rights that allow for more flexible and efficient use of the controller workforce and

the rapid introduction of new air traffic safety technology without protracted and cost-consuming procedures," said Joe Miniace, deputy assistant administrator for strategic labor management relations in the Human Resource Management Office.

FAA management also has

# NATCA Talks Begin

drawn attention to what it feels is a significant disparity in pay between controllers and other agency employees. The wage gap between the two groups has tripled over the past six years, said an FAA spokesperson. Blakey has been quick to note that the issue isn't necessarily about salary rollbacks, but equity within the agency's employee ranks and cost containment in a time of declining budgets. Balance is the word being used by the agency.

In perhaps the biggest departure from past practices, FAA is responding more vocally to issues raised by NATCA, Congress and other parties about the

negotiations. Although NATCA recently noted it has retained several public relations agencies and has begun advertising, FAA is not allowed similar actions because it is a federal agency.

However, FAA has established a website to present facts about the negotiations and address rumors that inevitably result from such negotiations. It will be the focal point for all news concerning negotiations (see sidebar story at right). Also, today, media relations specialists fanned out across the country to host press events about the negotiations. ✈

## Website To Track Negotiations

FAA has established a new website that will be the official location for all information about the contract negotiations.

Titled, "2005 Negotiations," the site can be accessed from a link on the employee website under "Highlights." There will be several sections containing background information, news updates and responses to rumors and rhetoric. "You're going to see a lot of stuff in other places about the contract talks," said David Mandell, FAA chief of staff. "This site is where FAA will be posting all official information."

Breaking news about contract talks also will appear on the front page of the employee website.

# In the midst of the safest period

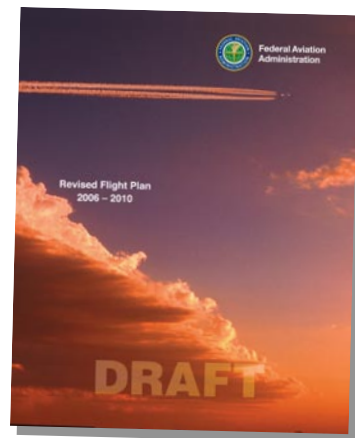
in commercial aviation history, FAA is faced with the challenge of not just maintaining safety, but increasing it. And it's looking to its employees for help.

The draft of the latest Flight Plan will be going online this week. Look for a message on the employee website. Management is seeking comments from employees about its four key areas: safety, capacity, international and organizational excellence.

There will be a feedback link that makes it quick and easy for employees to provide their input. Last year there were some problems with the link timing out before employees could finish commenting. That has been fixed.

"We really do read and think about every comment that's made," said Nan Shellabarger, director of aviation policy and plans, who helps put together the Flight Plan. "As far as what employees should look for, we expect most employees should understand how what they do on a day-to-day basis helps to achieve our goals."

Employees have until Aug. 7 to provide comments. ✈



# DRVSM's Triumph

Implementation of domestic required vertical separation minimum (DRVSM) has garnered unprecedented success. Tomorrow, July 20, FAA employees around the country will celebrate the six-month anniversary of the new procedure that has helped to significantly reduce operational errors.

DRVSM is a procedure that allows controllers to reduce the vertical separation between aircraft from 2,000 feet to 1,000 feet at altitudes of 29,000 feet and above.

In the first half of this year, controller operational errors have declined by 22 percent in that airspace. Airlines are reporting significant decreases in fuel costs because planes are flying more efficiently and the skies are opening up.

The magnitude of DRVSM's impact on the National Airspace System has been summed up in the turn of a familiar phrase: "It's the best thing since sliced bread" is now, "It's the best thing since DRVSM."

## Tune In

Administrator Marion Blakey will recognize employees who worked to make DRVSM a success during a broadcast to FAA employees on July 20. Joining her will be Nick Sabatini, associate administrator for aviation safety, and Russ Chew, chief operating officer of the Air Traffic Organization. The broadcast will be carried over the ATN Network at facilities with ATN classrooms or viewing rooms. It will also be available as a live webcast at <http://videoontheweb.faa.gov>. The broadcast runs from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. EDT.

# DRVSM's Triumph

Flight Standards laid the foundation for DRVSM's success years ago. "This was an enormous project," said Robert Swain, DRVSM program lead in the Office of Aviation Safety.

Swain came at the project with plenty of experience. As a United Airlines pilot, he witnessed how the theory behind DRVSM could save fuel. "I was saving 1,000 pounds of fuel every flight," he noted. Later, he served on the Eurocontrol RVSM program steering committee when Europe implemented RVSM.

Swain said the documentation alone took years. DRVSM had to meet standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization. New regulations had to be written and approved by a host of government agencies and companies. Guidance had to be written for operators and inspectors.



**This photo of three aircraft flying with RVSM over the North Atlantic shows the impact of closer spacing.**

The Aircraft Certification Service had to approve scores of supplemental certificates and service bulletins for nearly every type of business and commercial jet.

The project also required the training of 3,000 inspectors. Eleven 2-day seminars were held around the country to educate aircraft operators.

"The most difficult part was getting operators and aircraft modifications authorized," recalled Swain. That



## DRVSM's Triumph

fell to flight inspectors, who had to authorize more than 12,000 aircraft. “The thing that really amazed me was we knew the last 90 days [before implementation] were really going to be crunch time. Yet, the inspectors and managers out in the field made it happen. You just can’t say enough about the quality and quantity of work they accomplished.”

Flight Standards created a monitoring system to ensure that aircraft using DRVSM were flying at the correct pressure altitude. With help from the Systems Analysis Division at the William J. Hughes Technical Center, FAA designed the system for about \$500,000. A version used in Europe cost \$12 million.

DRVSM has reduced the number of conflicts — situations in which a controller orders a plane to move laterally or vertically — by more than 50 percent. Conflicts are a

major factor in operational errors by controllers.

“Prior to DRVSM, controllers and management were very cautious about the additional workload to controllers,” Swain said. “What the controllers have found is just the opposite. The workload actually goes down.”

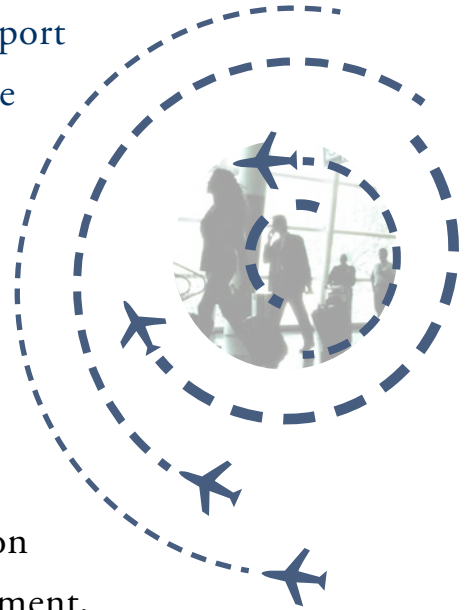
He told an anecdote he’d heard from a controller in Cleveland. DRVSM has resulted in less chatter between pilots and controllers. One night, a pilot assumed the controller wasn’t busy because there was so little conversation on the radio frequency. In fact, the controller was handling 11 aircraft, a significant load. “There’s not much conversation because there’s nothing to talk about,” Swain explained.

(For more on DRVSM, access ATO Online at <http://www.ato.faa.gov/>.) ✈

# Into The Whirlwind

**H**artsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport officially became the busiest U.S. airport in the first half of 2005, recording more than 497,000 operations.

What sets this accomplishment apart for Hartsfield's air traffic control tower is the environment in which the record was set. Over the past year, controllers and Technical Operations specialists have endured massive construction projects, huge administrative changes brought on by the Air Traffic Organization, physical displacement, hurricanes, new navigation procedures and increased scrutiny of runway incursions.



» **“It’s felt almost like a whirlwind everyday.”**

Yet, there were no major runway incursions or operational errors, and “miniscule impact” on arrival and departure times, said Frances Mulkey, the tower manager. Speaking to Mulkey you sense the heady mix of

# Into The Whirlwind

excitement and challenge she and her staff faced: “It’s felt almost like a whirlwind everyday. We couldn’t do it without the approach control and the outstanding support they provide,” she said.

The first challenge occurred with the 16-phase construction program that affected 90,000 square yards of taxiways and shut down primary routes for entering and exiting ramps.

“One of our biggest challenges is working around the construction,” said Gary Jackson, technical operations manager for the Atlanta facility. The

Atlanta airport contains more than 125 facilities. “The technicians here do a great job maintaining these facilities despite the challenges of such a busy airport,” said Jackson. “The contributions they make to a safe and efficient airport often go unnoticed. They are true professionals,” he added.

Adding to the difficulty was construction of the new air traffic

**Jody Chastine is one of the cadre of controllers handling record traffic at Atlanta Hartsfield Tower.**



# Into The Whirlwind

control tower, whose height blocked portions of the taxiways as well. “It significantly increased the tower’s workload because we had to stage the aircraft differently to avoid closed and non-visible areas,” Mulkey said. “Movement of traffic on the airport surface had to be choreographed to perfection to prevent gridlock at the airport,” she added.

At the same time traffic was increasing, air traffic supervisors and controllers were working shifts at both the tower and the TRACON located 28 miles away in Peachtree City. The FAA’s decision to create a stand-alone tower and TRACON resolved that challenge. Each facility now has its own dedicated management and controller staff.

But the split did create logistical nightmares. “We were starting a new tower administratively at an airport that is the busiest in the world, even though we had vacancies in several key operational and administrative positions,” said Mulkey. Her staff



**Airway Transportation Systems Specialist John Smith checks the fiber optics system at Atlanta Hartsfield Tower.**

# Into The Whirlwind

had to scrounge for space, equipment and furniture. New facility directives and operational letters of agreement had to be developed that specified how the tower would operate with the Atlanta Center and TRACON, airlines, ramp towers and airport.

Meantime, new budget and time and attendance software mandated by the ATO had to be learned and implemented. "Air traffic managers are having to learn to manage budgets in ways we've never done before," Mulkey said. "Our main focus used to be on air traffic operations and procedures. Now, in addition to the operation, we're trying to think more in a business sense."

Controllers were doing some learning of their own. Although working with only 36 full-time controllers, management had to find time for each controller to attend classes in RNAV, which allows pilots to use a variety of technological aids to navigate. "This was the biggest change in procedures in Atlanta in over 20 years," Mulkey said.

"It's challenging and very rewarding," said Jackson. "We've got an excellent team of 40 dedicated employees here who provide maintenance services around the clock," he said. ✈

# Now This

**W**e've got to do something about airline delays. Reduce their number and duration, sure, but more important we've got to put them into perspective. They're now getting front-page coverage and in the great scheme of things they don't merit that kind of treatment. Nobody likes delays, especially the airlines, which lose money.

But delays are often necessary to avoid dangerous weather. Other times, they are simply the unavoidable by-product of this complex aerial dance that the National Airspace System stages every day in an effort to get tens of thousands of people to different destinations around the globe.



Recently, at the Albuquerque airport on the way home, word came over the P.A. system that the flight would be delayed 45 minutes. No big deal. I was scheduled to return to Dulles at 12:30 a.m. Sunday morning anyway. Yet, looking around the room, there was a discernible disgust on the faces of many of the passengers.

Some got up and started pecking ostentatiously on their Blackberries. A few even made a point of explaining the impact to the airline agent at the counter. No doubt the delay might have involved serious inconvenience for a handful of the passengers, but for most, probably not.



# Now This

My observation is that we need to categorize delays by their severity, just as we have wisely done with operational errors and runway incursions. The system might look something like this: If a human kidney is being flown to D.C. to save a dying person, and the delay prevents the kidney from getting there on time, that is a serious delay, even a fatal delay. So, we'll put delays like that in Category A. Other delays — say, Category B delays — might involve a company representative missing an important client meeting or causing a father to miss his daughter's performance in a school play. And, finally, there are Category C delays that

involve inconvenience and ruffle our sense of time and order, but nothing more serious than that. Most delays would probably fall into Category C.

The 17th century French scientist/philosopher Blaise Pascal once wrote that all man's problems stem from one thing — his inability to remain quiet in a room alone. I am not quite sure what Pascal had in mind, but as I looked around the Albuquerque airport waiting room I realized that Pascal was on to something important. So, while we need to get delays into perspective, perhaps we need to get ourselves into perspective first.

Sitting on my credenza in my office is a small notepad that my friend Janice Stackhouse gave me years ago. It features the wisdom of cartoon character Maxine, who, looking as unkempt as an unmade bed, is sitting at a kitchen table in curlers nursing a cup of coffee. The caption reads: "In a hundred years, this won't matter. It barely matters now." Maxine may not look like a philosopher, but she is on to something important as well. ✈

— Gerald E. Lavey

# Deviations

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# AOA HIGHLIGHTS

**O**ur friend, Jerry Lavey, has gone to the far reaches for vacation. He and his wife are visiting China and Tibet. He couldn't get any farther away, could he? We wish them well.

I suspect for Jerry, it is a combination of journey and quest... a chance to explore a new environment, and a chance to explore the inner self. I, for one, can't wait for his return and a chance to hear what he has seen, and what he has discovered. Meanwhile he has left the writing of Highlights to others and this week it falls to me.

## FAA Raises Safety Rating for Greece

The FAA has raised the safety rating for Greece following a reassessment of that country's civil aviation authority conducted in May 2005.

Specifically, FAA determines whether a foreign civil aviation authority has an adequate infrastructure for international aviation safety oversight as defined by ICAO standards (not by the FAA).

What this means is that Greece adheres to the safety standards of the United Nations technical agency for aviation that establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

## One Ringy Dingy...Two Ringy Dingies..

As one of the two agencies that would ultimately have to approve cell phone usage on airplanes during flight (the Federal Communications Commission is the other), the FAA is looking carefully at safety issues and has commissioned a study that will help determine if the use of cell phones, Blackberries and wireless laptops pose unacceptable risks to flight control systems. The study is due in December 2006. Nick Sabatini, associate administrator for aviation safety, testified in front of the House Aviation Subcommittee that, even if the

# AOA HIGHLIGHTS

FCC ultimately rescinds its ban on in-flight cell phone use, the FAA will have the final say in whether or not airlines can allow it. Airlines would have to prove to the FAA that any systems meet our stringent certification standards and would have to show through tests that cell phone use would not affect aircraft communication, navigation or flight control systems. The New York Times reported that law enforcement agencies have voiced concerns about the use of such devices to trigger explosives. There is no consensus at this time on the use of phones on aircraft, although flight attendants voiced concerns that the use of cell phones could escalate

passenger rage and be distracting to attendants in their safety duties. The chatter surrounding this debate is likely to get louder.

## NTSB Cites FAA

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) took FAA to task this week for not taking any short-term actions to prevent fuel tank explosions like the one that downed TWA Flight 800 nine years ago. Specifically, NTSB cited the FAA for not requiring airlines to use ground-conditioned air instead of the airplane's on-board air conditioning to cool the center wing tanks and reduce flammable fuel/air mixtures. The FAA has responded by saying that while ground

conditioned air is helpful, it does not reduce fuel tank nearly as much as inerting, especially on very hot days. The FAA has drafted a rule that essentially requires U.S. airlines to reduce fuel tank by using an inerting system. That rule is awaiting approval. Don't forget it was the FAA that proved that inerting could be done on commercial airplanes, despite the opinions of many aviation experts. The FAA also has issued scores of airworthiness directives addressing ignition sources and the way fuel tanks are designed and maintained.

## Your Choice of Air

Airline passengers who need oxygen concentrators in daily

# AOA HIGHLIGHTS

life now have two choices when they fly. The FAA has approved the use of portable oxygen concentrator units on-board commercial flights. These devices, manufactured by AirSep Corp. and Inogen, do not use compressed oxygen, which the FAA considers a hazardous material. Passengers can use either type of concentrator during all phases of flight. However, carriers must first ensure that the portable concentrator does not interfere with electrical, navigation or communication equipment on the aircraft. Previously, passengers could use medical oxygen only if the airline furnished the equipment.

## Dog Days Are Here

Speaking of air—there's been a lack of it here in the city as a withering grey heat and humid spell has invaded Washington. Summer has really taken hold. The atmosphere is like Jello—and it's a hard walk outdoors. Another storm is forming in the Caribbean and talk of the terrorist bombings in London is quieting down for now. Stories of Londoners' humanity and courage during the horrors were helpful to contemplate—how many people were kind and courageous in the eye of the storm. I was walking to work when I thought about all this and wondered how I would react if ever I had to confront such a horrible thing. I hope

I never find out. As I passed the Capitol on my left and the Washington Monument on my right crossing the Mall, I was glad to be here, and glad that the limp air was still and no one was chattering on a cell phone within earshot. I stopped. I wanted to hold the moment just a little longer.

Jane Goodman, Internal Communications ✈

# Your Two Cents

**A**s promised last edition, Focus FAA has made some improvements based on readers' feedback.

All stories now carry an issue number and date. This will help employees search for stories in back issues.

We've added a "Home" icon at the top right hand side of each story page to take the reader back to Focus FAA's front page. We've also added an icon on the Focus FAA cover that will take the reader back to the FAA employee home page.

Designers have created a more printer-friendly edition that should require the use of less toner by those facilities that print out the edition.

Finally, readers were having a difficult time using the "Feedback" form on the menu bar. It now asks that all feedback be sent to [jim.tise@faa.gov](mailto:jim.tise@faa.gov). There is no more form to fill out.

In an edition or two, we hope to have a mechanism in place that allows readers to turn

off the audio segment of AOA Highlights. Some employees prefer to read through the highlights without the sound.

We'll keep you informed of new changes as they occur. Thanks for writing.

Jim Tise  
Focus FAA Editor

## FEEDBACK

### HIGHER LEVELS

Focus FAA does not seem anywhere near as useful as AOA highlights. We liked AOA highlights better, for it kept us better informed of what was going on at higher levels.

**James H Pratt**

**Great Lakes Region**

*(Editor's Note: AOA Highlights appears under the Opinion section of Focus FAA every edition.)*



# Your Two Cents

## PIPE DOWN

I detest websites that automatically start talking to you, whether they are advertisements or just information. At least the advertisements have a hold button where the speaker can be stopped; I find no such option on our site. I realize I am speaking from both sides of my mouth, as several years ago when I was responsible for my division Intranet site I would have music clips play as background introduction to each page (sometimes I had objections to the clips I picked). Is there a way, other than switching to the HTML version, to stop the speaker from speaking?

**David Hays**

**Mike Monroney Aeronautical  
Center**

## SHEDDING LIGHT ON LEDs

Great article on LED red obstruction lights! Thanks for helping us get the word out on this opportunity to save money and time for the FAA and to reduce risk to FAA employees.

**Tom Holloway**

**Headquarters** ✈